

CONSTRUCTING A RESIDENTIAL ACCESSORY STRUCTURE IN THE CITY OF CORVALLIS

The Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC) and the City's Land Development Code (LDC) regulate residential accessory structures within the City of Corvallis. Some accessory structures may be exempt from obtaining a building permit. However, all structures are still required to meet building setbacks, height, and other applicable LDC standards, regardless of whether a permit is required.

This brochure is intended to provide basic information for constructing an accessory structure. Not all possible scenarios have been addressed in this brochure.

This information is not intended to replace the regulations found in the Oregon Residential Specialty Code or the City's LDC. Please contact Development Services at (541) 766-6929 if you have questions about your proposal or need assistance to verify zoning or other development requirements.

MORE INFORMATION

Many accessory structure scenarios are not included in this brochure. Please feel free to discuss your proposal to ensure your plan complies with the current City of Corvallis standards. Please contact Development Services at (541) 766-6929 for more information.



*The City of Corvallis supports a diverse
and sustainable community*

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RESIDENTIAL ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

LDC 4.3



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WHAT IS AN ACCESSORY STRUCTURE?

- An accessory structure is a structure that is customarily incidental and subordinate to the main use of the property. Typical accessory structures include sheds, shops, barns, carports and detached garages.
- An accessory structure is freestanding and structurally separated from the main use.
- Accessory structures shall not contain sleeping rooms or become permanent living areas.

IS A BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED?

- The Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC) requires that a **building permit** be obtained for the construction of any accessory structure that exceeds:
 - 200 square feet of gross floor area.
 - 10 feet in height as measured from finished floor level to the average height of the highest roof gable.
- Additionally, plumbing or electrical permit(s) are required if the proposed accessory structure will contain plumbing or electrical connections.
- Even if an accessory structure is exempt from the requirements to obtain a building permit, LDC standards (setbacks, height, lot coverage, floodplain permits, etc.) still apply.

ARE THERE ANY SIZE OR PLACEMENT RESTRICTIONS?

Chapter 4.3 of the Land Development Code (LDC) regulates setbacks from property lines, maximum height, and the maximum lot area covered by accessory structures. LDC standards apply, regardless of whether a structure is exempt from building permit requirements. Accessory structures are subject to the same requirements as the primary uses in the zone, except as otherwise provided below:

- An accessory structure shall not exceed 14 feet in height.
- Structures shall not occupy more than 35% of a required yard. A required yard includes any area within a minimum setback identified in the underlying zoning district.
- In a residential zone, an interior side and/or rear yard setback may be reduced to 3 feet, if the structure is placed behind the front façade of the house.
- In a residential zone, the exterior side yard of a **corner lot** must meet the zones regular minimum setback requirement.

CAN I VARY FROM THESE STANDARDS?

If you are having trouble meeting the LDC requirements for accessory structures, you are first encouraged to look at alternative designs or other creative means.

For example, if you are proposing a 300 square foot structure (building permit would be required) and are having trouble meeting the 14 foot maximum height requirement, you could potentially attach the structure to the dwelling. This would be considered an addition to the primary structure and would be subject to the height standard of the underlying zoning district rather than the 14 foot maximum height limitation applicable to accessory structures. However, keep in mind that attached structures must meet the minimum setback requirements of the underlying zone.

If you are still unable to comply with the requirements of the Land Development Code, a Lot Development Option (LDO), or other land use process, may allow you to vary from the height, setbacks or other LDC standards. For more information about the LDO process, please contact Development Services at (541) 766-6929.